Disturbance in train services in Assam

3385. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the schedule of trains between Assam (Lumding, Silchar) and Tripura (Agartala has been getting greatly disturbed almost regularly during the last few months;

(b) whether the standard of passenger amenities in these metre-gauge trains has gone down and is not at all maintained;

(c) whether the shortage of staff is the main reason for all this mismanagement; and

(d) the steps Government has taken or is going to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir. The punctuality of trains is getting affected due to on-going gauge conversion works which are permitted only during day light hours.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The efforts are on for early completion of the works and also Tripura State Government has been requested to permit Railways to undertake round the clock train operations to improve the running.

Rail link between Chennai Egmore and Chennai Central railway stations

3386. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed project linking Central and Egmore stations at Chennai is likely to be taken up for implementation;

(b) if so, the details and the time schedule thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The BG (Broad Gauge) link project between Chennai Egmore and Chennai Central has been sanctioned. However, Government of Tamil Nadu has not conveyed its clearance for the B.G. connectivity between Chennai Central and Egmore as it would clash with the alignment under the two major projects *viz.* Chennai Metro Rail project and the project of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to construct Elevated Expressway connecting Chennai port and Maduravoyal. Further, the proposed rail link cannot be constructed without the flyover on EVR Periyar High Road for which Tamil Nadu Government has not given clearance.

Gauge conversion work of Morbi-Vankaner in Gujarat

3387. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: